reorganisation was the increase in the number of the charging stations and placing them all in charge of a new class of officers, Sub-Inspectors, who should ordinarily be graduates appointed straight on to the Department. The character of Police work is already showing signs of improvement, as the result of this substitution of the Sub-Inspectors in the place of the old Head Constables for the charge of stations. It is, however, inevitable that, with such a large number of new hands in charge of the stations, efficiency should suffer to some extent at the outset. As, however, the Sub-Inspectors pick up experience, the Government are sanguine that the work of the Police would improve in every way. The number of policemen prosecuted fell from 100 to 66; the percentage of conviction remained, however, practically unchanged, being 12, against 11 in the previous year. Vigorous action was taken during the year to detect cases of false coining—of Sirkar as well as of British Indian coins. 13 of such cases were reported during the year, of which 9 were disposed of and 4 were pending when the year closed; of the 9 cases disposed of, 4 cases ended in conviction and 5 in acquittal.

12. **The Central Prison.**—There was an increase in the number of prisoners, the average daily strength of the convicted prisoners rising from 423 to 468. The percentage of sick to strength fell, however, from seven to four, and the daily average of sick from 31 to 21. The number of deaths also fell from 24 to 12. Jail earnings showed improvement, the receipts rising from Rs. 43,000 to Rs. 67,500; the increase has been solely under Printing and Binding work. I should add, in explanation, that this work is done wholly for the departments of Government and that there can be no question, therefore, of any competition with private enterprise.

13. **Criminal Justice.**— The number of Criminal Courts rose from 64 to 67, the increase being due to the establishment of three more Stationary Magistrates' Courts, at Kottayam, Vycome and Mundakayam. And since the close of the year, two more Stationary Magistrates' Courts have been established, at Karunagapalli and Sherthallai. During the last six years, so many as 8 Stationary Magistrates' Courts have been newly opened for the purpose of relieving the Tahsildars, and in the result, several Tahsildars are now wholly free from magisterial work; and in the case of several others, the magisterial duties have been substantially reduced. The Government recognise that, in view to the large increase that has taken place in the work of Tahsildars in recent years, more relief is still due to them, and the policy of giving that relief—by the appointment of Stationary Magistrates—will be continued. While dealing with Criminal Justice, I would specially mention the fall in the number of juveniles brought to trial and convicted, and also the increasing percentage of them committed to the Reformatory. Again, in regard to public servants, the Government note with some satisfaction that the evil of the reckless prosecution of public servants has begun to show some abatement ; the number of public servants prosecuted fell from 202 to 147, the number convicted rising from 5 to 15. You could gauge the volume of the insecurity from the circumstance that, out of the 147 prosecutions, only 32 were initiated by the Government or heads of departments, the remaining 115 prosecutions having been started by private individuals ; out of the 32 Governmental prosecutions, so many as 11 ended in conviction, but only 4 cases ended in conviction out of the 115 private prosecutions. The Criminal Procedure Code Regulation has been recently amended and Magistrates are now competent to award compensation to the accused in warrant cases (as they already were in summons cases) where the prosecutions are frivolous. The volume of work done by the several Criminal Courts shewed no material change, but the work was done with somewhat greater expedition. Though the number of witnesses examined by the Magistracy rose from 37,890 to 40,314, the number detained beyond 3 days fell from 537 to 173.

14. **Civil Justice.**—The civil litigation of the State increased as usual—from 62,385 to 69,258. I am speaking of the *fresh* institutions. The increase was wholly in the original suits filed in the Munsiffs' Courts. The original suits filed in the District Courts fell slightly, and the appeal suits fell both in the District Courts and in the High Court. The Munsiffs' Courts were unable to keep abreast of the increasing volume of their fresh work; their arrears rose from 15,592 to 17,618 ; the number of suits of between one and two years' pendency on their file also rose, from 2,164 to 3,696, and that of more than two years' pendency from 286 to 355. The largest

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

increase was, as usual, in petty suits, those below Rs. 50 in value. I have, elsewhere, referred to the Bill for the constitution of Village Panchayat Courts, which now awaits final reading in the Legislative Council. The object of this legislation is to transfer gradually to village bodies (to be newly created) a portion of the large volume of petty litigation which has now to be dealt with by the stipendiary Courts. The success of the legislation would, of course, depend wholly on the way in which the people work it.

15. **Registration.**—Four new sub-registry offices were opened and a new registration district was also formed. There was a decrease of 9,500 in the number of documents presented for registration, due, it is said, to the passing of the Nair Regulation, and the restriction imposed thereby on the powers of the *karanavan* in alienating the *tarwad* properties. There was an increase in the receipts of the Department, on account of the fact that the revision of the fee table effected in 1087 was in operation throughout the year ; but, *per contra*, the expenditure went up by Rs. 34,000, on account of the reorganisation of the department and the additional offices opened. In the result, the ratio of the expenditure to the gross income rose from 31% to 37%.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

16. **Agriculture.**—The Agricultural Department did good work during the year. Copies of Dr. Kunjan Pillai's report—in English and in Malayalam—will be placed in the hands of the Members. It is a matter of satisfaction to the Government that the efforts of this Department are being responded to, to an increasing extent, by the ryots. The cocoanut palm disease in Middle Travancore continued to engage serious attention. The inspection of the infected areas and the numbering of the affected trees in them, the segregation of the infected trees in isolated areas, the issue of special manures, the propagation of disease-resistant varieties of the cocoanut and other measures, were vigorously pushed on.

17. **Public Works.**—The total expenditure on Public Works amounted to the high figure of Rs. 36,85,000, of which a sum of Rs. 33,57,000 was expended by the Chief Engineer and Rs. 3,28,000 by the Maramath Department. The expenditure on the Kodayar Project during the year was Rs. 3,88,000, the capital outlay on the Project working up to Rs. 68,40,000 at the close of 1088 Public Works—including Irrigation—account for a substantial portion of the increase which has taken place in the expenditure of the State during the last six years, and under Mr. Bastow's skilful guidance, the Chief Engineer's Department has attained a high level of usefulness and efficiency. The following figures will be instructive :—

1082	Rs. 15,80,000.
1083	„ 17,25,000.
1084	„ 20,87,000.
1085	„ 24,99,000.
1086	„ 22,78,000.
1087	„ 25,10,000.
1088	„ 33,57,000.

Most of the subjects brought up year after year in the Assembly relate to the need for more public works, mainly communications ; also, numerous buildings are on hand for the several departments of the Government, mainly Education. It is inevitable, under these circumstances, that the expenditure on Public Works should go up. On account of the large increase in the expenditure on works, the charges on account of the establishment of the Chief Engineer fell from 15% of the total outlay in 1087 to 13% in 1088.

In November 1908, the Kottayam Members of the Fifth Session of the Assembly framed a scheme of works for their Division. To enable you to realise the progress made in carrying out that programme, I have ordered a statement to be prepared,

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly